


Public Testimony

From michael Slater <commissionerslater@gmail.com>

Date Mon 3/3/2025 6:15 AM

To FORESTRY Boardof * ODF <boardofforestry@odf.oregon.gov>

 1 attachment (52 KB)

ODF_PC_Letter.pdf;

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Please see the attached letter.

MICHAEL SLATER

Salem Planning Commission

C: 202.425.5493

[LinkedIn](#) | [Portfolio](#)

March 2, 2025

Oregon Department of Forestry
2600 State ST
Salem, OR 97310

RE: ODF Salem Campus Mill Creek Frontage

Dear Oregon Board of Forestry:

I am writing to you in your capacity as owner of property that includes Mill Creek frontage.

As you may know, the Oregon Department of State Lands has designated Mill Creek as a critical salmon habitat. The quality of Mill Creek, and its suitability for salmon habitat, has declined over the past several generations as a result of development and land management practices. In fact, Salem must meet US Environmental Protection Agency Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements for heat and mercury in Mill Creek.

The City has responded with a TMDL implementation plan that includes tree-planting and bank stabilization projects in riparian areas. While definitions for riparian areas vary by agency, the City prioritizes the first 50 feet from a stream bank, which is consistent with Oregon land use goal 5. The City's resources are limited, however, and we must look to actions by private landowners to help meet our requirements.

I know that ODF shares the City's concern for the quality of our community's streams and their habitat capacity. I encourage the Board to assess your Salem headquarters campus to identify opportunities to improve your Mill Creek frontage for the benefit of our salmon population and other native species that depend on the stream and its riparian zone.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at commissionerslater@gmail.com or (202) 425-5493.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Slater

President, Salem Planning Commission

New State Forester

From Cheryl Johnson <cheryl067@outlook.com>

Date Thu 4/3/2025 6:21 PM

To Governor Kotek * GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; HUNTINGTON Geoff * GOV <geoff.huntington@oregon.gov>; FORESTRY Boardof * ODF <BoardofForestry@odf.oregon.gov>; KELLY Jim * ODF <Jim.Kelly@odf.oregon.gov>

Cc AGPAOA Liz * ODF <Liz.Agpaoa@odf.oregon.gov>; LOVECHIO Alexi * ODF <Alexi.Lovechio@odf.oregon.gov>; MCCOMB Brenda * ODF <Brenda.Mccomb@odf.oregon.gov>; JUSTICE Joe * ODF <Joe.Justice@odf.oregon.gov>; DEUMLING Ben * ODF <Ben.Deumling@odf.oregon.gov>; CURTISS Heath * ODF <Heath.Curtiss@odf.oregon.gov>; FERRARI Chandra Alene * GOV <Chandra.Alene.FERRARI@oregon.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from cheryl067@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek, Natural Resource Staff, and members of the Board of Forestry,

We are writing to you as concerned citizens of Clatsop County regarding the appointment of the next State Forester.

We are property owners and residents of Clatsop County since 1975. At our home in Brownsmead, we share a back property line with ODF here on the land where we raised our children and now enjoy grandchildren. We have friends and neighbors who make their living in the timber industry.

Our concerns center on 3 critical issues:

Habitat loss and impact to streams and waterways

The Columbia River is currently home to 13 species of threatened or endangered salmon. The federal government, states and non-profits have spent millions of dollars to repair damaged salmon habitat over the last decade. Clear cutting results in stream warming and sedimentation. Clatsop County forests, especially the Astoria District are located on steep hillsides where sediment and pesticides have a short journey to end up in the Columbia River.

Health concerns related to pesticide spraying

The negative impacts of herbicide use have long been known and are of deep concern to Oregon residents.

Transparency in planning and good communication with affected residents

We have been active in attempting to work with the Astoria District foresters concerning the Annual Operation Plans in 2024.

The landowners and residents of both Mothball Hill and Davis Ridge proposed cut sites had **repeatedly** asked to meet with Astoria ODF to voice their concerns, ask questions and get information. They were **repeatedly** told Astoria ODF would NOT meet with them until AFTER July 1. This is the date when the list

of harvest sites would be finalized. We are one year down the road and there still have not been meetings with affected landowners!

As citizens of the North Coast, we ask that you appoint a state forester who:

- Will safeguard coastal drinking water sources by protecting mature forest ecosystems.
- Recognizes the harm that pesticide and herbicide application poses on our communities and soil health, and will work to prohibit pesticide spraying on forestland.
- Supports the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and implements the Climate Change and Carbon Plan (CCCP).
- Recognizes the need for improved communication with and engagement of the public in ODF processes, such as the Annual Operations Plan (AOP).
- Values transparency, and is willing to communicate and collaborate with local stakeholders, including community advocates.

The State Forester and his/her leadership affects not only the Oregon state forests, but the health and quality of the lives of Oregon residents.

Cheryl Johnson & Ted Messing

44183 Peterson Lane


Astoria, OR 97103

CRA Comments regarding hiring a new State Forester

From Chuck Willer <chuckw@coastrange.org>

Date Thu 2/20/2025 12:02 AM

To FORESTRY Boardof * ODF <BoardofForestry@oregon.gov>

 1 attachment (93 KB)

CRA State Forester Letter-2-17.pdf;

Dear Chair Kelly and members of the Board of Forestry,

Please accept the following attached comments regarding hiring a new State Forester. I call your attention to several reports mentioned in the comments. Please watch the initial 30 minute presentation in the video. If you have questions regarding the economics paper do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,

Chuck Willer
Executive Director
Coast Range Association
(541) 231-6651
chuckw@coastrange.org

CC. Governor Tina Kotek via postal mail.



To: Governor Tina Kotek, Oregon Board of Forestry

From: The Coast Range Association

Date: February 18, 2025

Re: Hiring a new State Forester

Dear Governor Kotek, Chair Kelly and Members of the Oregon Board of Forestry,

The Board of Forestry will hire the next state forester to lead the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). Oregon faces two great challenges. One is a dangerously warming climate of what now will be at least 2°C, and 3°C if we continue with current trends. The second immediate challenge is the federal government and the policies and actions of President Trump. Yet, Oregon can lead the country through science-based forest management and a renewed commitment to an innovative government. Political forces that undermine common welfare must not prevail.

First, let's check in on the current reality of climate. Irrespective of the irrational stance of the White House, we are on a perilous trajectory. I call your attention to a newly published report from Australia by the Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration (December 2, 2024). A video overview of the report is available here as well as a link to the report:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flgq63f7TOc>

The report addresses what life may look like under 3°C of warming – the path we are on unless serious change occurs?

The second report I bring to your attention is a critique of the economic model used in IPCC analyses. Authored by three eminent economists, including Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz, the authors lay out a devastating assessment of IPCC economics. Many issues the authors raised were echoed in the Coast Range Association's comments on the state forest HCP DEIS. The report can be accessed here: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w28472>

I now turn to specific issues and recommendations for hiring a new State Forester.

Near-term, implementing the Private Forest Accord, adopting a Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan, and finalizing Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) for private forests and western Oregon state forests are of the highest priority. Restructuring the ODF's revenue model will be a key milestone in achieving multiple long-term goals.

The above issues require an exceptional person. Such a person must be a visionary as well as a great leader. We urge the Board of Forestry to seek out a person with the following qualities:

- A thorough understanding of forest and aquatic ecosystems and an up to date awareness of the threat of a warming climate.
- A commitment to policies that support a productive economy for all people over the interests of one business sector or those of great wealth. Based on guidance from ODF staff, the current HCP **Business Case Analysis** addresses recreation, carbon sequestration and other such values under the frame of “ecosystems services” and then goes on to state such values “*primarily affect benefits enjoyed by the public, therefore these are less important for a business case analysis.*” Really?
- Understands the unique qualities of coastal moist forests especially with regards to carbon sequestration. The fact that Oregon’s coastal forest is the greatest carbon storing forest per acre on the planet must be front and center in policy discussions. The good news is that the Pacific Northwest will not experience the dire impacts of 2⁰ centigrade warming like the Southwest or the Gulf states.
- Has a track record of welcoming public involvement in decision-making and public accountability for decisions. We hope the usual stakeholder model is augmented by a future model of consultation that includes all Oregonians.
- Possesses strong communication skills and a competence to lead based on the common good.
- Proven commitment and experience in creating a culture of respect and inclusion. It is no secret that ODF has much work to do in this area. Exceptional leadership is required to change agency culture.
- Experience with wildfire resilience and resistance appropriate to ODF’s role in wildfire management. We believe ODF’s past response to wildfire is of the highest caliber. Yet, new approaches are needed beyond “fighting” wildfire. The narrative of resilience must be augmented with an agenda of forest wildfire **resistance**.
- Competence for working with elected officials to secure the funding necessary to fulfill the agency’s mission. This agenda includes work to shift away from the current funding model.

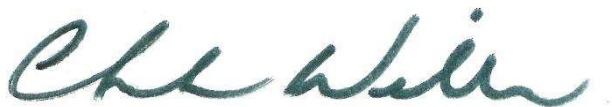
Priorities for the next state forester:

- **Strategic Planning:** Develop an agency strategic plan consistent with today’s challenges especially climate warming. In early 2023, your office directed state agencies to develop strategic plans by June 1, 2024. The Department of Forestry currently lacks a strategic plan.

- **Lead adaptive updates** to the ODF's Climate Change and Carbon Plan (Climate Plan) approved by the Board of Forestry in 2021. Such updates must respond to the carbon sequestration potential of state forests and the evolving reality of climate warming.
- **Complete the implementation** of the Private Forest Accord and finalize the Habitat Conservation Plan for private forests (PFA HCP) by the end of 2027.
- **Advance climate related goals** and ecological forest management for state forests through the adoption of a Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan. And, begin consideration of a radically different forest management paradigm as the reality of climate change overwhelms the dominant narrative.
- **Finalize** the Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan by early 2026.
- **Improve public notice and engagement** in decision-making by developing processes that engage a broad spectrum of Oregon's population. Conversely, engage communities proximate to state owned forests when developing Annual Operations Plans.

Being a public servant is a difficult job in today's world. Reactionary forces work tirelessly to undermine the common good and spread false narratives. Leading an agency central to the identity of Oregon will be a big challenge. The Coast Range Association looks forward to supporting the next State Forester.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chuck Willer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Chuck Willer
Executive Director
Coast Range Association

State Forester Values, Qualifications and Priorities

From Michael Lang <mlang@wildsalmoncenter.org>

Date Tue 2/18/2025 11:27 PM

To HUNTINGTON Geoff * GOV <geoff.huntington@oregon.gov>; FERRARI Chandra Alene * GOV <Chandra.Alene.FERRARI@oregon.gov>; KELLY Jim * ODF <Jim.Kelly@odf.oregon.gov>; MCCOMB Brenda * ODF <Brenda.Mccomb@odf.oregon.gov>; JUSTICE Joe * ODF <Joe.Justice@odf.oregon.gov>; AGPAOA Liz * ODF <Liz.Agpaoa@odf.oregon.gov>; DEUMLING Ben * ODF <Ben.Deumling@odf.oregon.gov>; CURTISS Heath * ODF <Heath.Curtiss@odf.oregon.gov>

 1 attachment (2 MB)

State Forester Letter.pdf;

Dear Governor Kotek, Governor's Natural Resource Staff, Chair Kelly and Board of Forestry Members,

Please accept and consider this letter from member groups in the State Forest Coalition regarding the selection of a new State Forester. Our groups look forward to participating and providing recommendations in the selection process.

Thank you.

Best,

Michael Lang
Oregon Senior Policy Manager
Wild Salmon Center
(503) 890-3012



To: Governor Tina Kotek, Oregon Board of Forestry

From: Wild Salmon Center, Oregon Wild, Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, Cascadia Wildlands, Bird Alliance of Oregon, MCAT, 350PDX, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection, Great Old Broads for Wilderness - Cascade-Volcanoes Chapter

Date: February 18, 2025

Re: State Forester Values, Qualifications and Priorities

Dear Governor Kotek, Chair Kelly and Members of the Oregon Board of Forestry,

The Board of Forestry is tasked with hiring the next state forester to lead the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) in responding to unprecedented challenges and opportunities. These include responding to the threats of climate change and fulfilling its goal of being a national leader in climate-smart forestry, protecting communities from wildfires, implementing the Private Forest Accord, adopting a new Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan, finalizing the Habitat Conservation Plans for private forests and western Oregon state forests, restructuring the ODF's revenue model, and restoring the public's trust in the agency to operate with transparency, accountability and respect for all people.

Given the broad scope of these needs, the next state forester should be a visionary leader who can bring about the structural and cultural changes necessary for fulfilling the agency's responsibilities. These include:

- A deep understanding of ecological forest management and support for its implementation.
- Thorough understanding of the threats of climate change and biodiversity loss, an understanding of the incredible value and potential of natural climate solutions, and a demonstrated commitment to addressing these challenges and opportunities.
- A track record of transparency in decision-making and public accountability for decisions.
- Strong communication skills and willingness to listen to all communities, partners, agencies and key stakeholders.

- A skilled manager able to provide leadership, direction, and support for the ODF and who can engage effectively with the Board of Forestry, Governor's office, media, and the public.
- Proven commitment and experience in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion throughout an organizational structure and creating a culture of respect and inclusion.
- A track record of requiring the highest professional standards for employees.
- Experience with fire management and ecology, proactive responses to wildfire focused on community protection.
- Experience in working with elected officials to diversify and secure funding necessary to fulfill the agency's statutory responsibilities.

Priorities for the next state forester

- Strategic Planning: Develop an agency strategic plan with "SMART" goals, objectives, strategies, and action plans. In early 2023, Governor Kotek directed state agencies to develop strategic plans by June 1, 2024. Agency strategic plans are required to follow an outline provided by the Department of Administrative Services and include, at a minimum, specific, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals and objectives, strategies, action plans, and monitoring and evaluation requirements. The ODF currently lacks a comprehensive strategic plan containing these mandatory components.
- Implement the Climate Change and Carbon Plan (Climate Plan), approved by the Board of Forestry in 2021, with SMART goals, strategies, tactics, measurable outcomes and timely monitoring and evaluation. Implement the Climate Plan's goals of establishing Oregon as a national leader in climate-smart forestry. Create a project manager position to lead implementation of the plan. Establish benchmarks for progress in meeting SMART goals and require regular reports to the Board of Forestry on progress implementing the Climate Plan.
- Complete implementation of the Private Forest Accord, finalize the Private Forest Accord Habitat Conservation Plan for private forests (PFA HCP), and receive a federal incidental take permit by the end of 2027.
- Advance ecological forest management principles for state forests through the adoption of a new Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan.
- Finalize the Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan by early 2026 and approve incidental take permits.
- Improve public notice and engagement in decision-making, including engaging communities and surrounding landowners in Annual Operations Plans for state forests.

We encourage the Board and the Governor to engage in an open and inclusive process for hiring the next state forester and our groups look forward to participating in the process.

Sincerely,

Joseph Youren
Forest Issues Director
Seven Capes Bird Alliance

Casey Kulla
State Forest Policy Coordinator
Oregon Wild

Grace Brahler
Wildlands Director
Cascadia Wildlands

Joe Liebezeit
Director of Statewide Conservation
Bird Alliance of Oregon

Rand Schenck
Forestry and Natural Lands Lead
Mobilizing Climate Action Together (MCAT)

Eliza Walton
Coalition Director
Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Brenna Bell
Forest Climate Manager
350PDX

Nancy Webster
President
North Coast Communities for Watershed
Protection

Damon Motz-Storey
Chapter Director
Sierra Club Oregon Chapter

Darlene Chirman
Leadership Team, Cascade-Volcanoes
Chapter
Great Old Broads For Wilderness

Michael Lang
Oregon Senior Policy Manager
Wild Salmon Center

New State Forester

From Rhonda Piasecki <coyotevibe@yahoo.com>

Date Sun 3/2/2025 6:57 PM

To FORESTRY Boardof * ODF <boardofforestry@odf.oregon.gov>

You don't often get email from coyotevibe@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I'm writing to urge all the members of the board to focus on hiring a new state forester who is committed to the following:

- Responds to the threats of climate change and implements the Climate Change and Carbon Plan.
- Fulfills the Department of Forestry's goal of being a [national leader in climate-smart forestry](#).
- Protect communities from wildfires.
- Implement the Private Forest Accord.
- Adopt a new Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan.
- Finalize the Habitat Conservation Plans for private forests and western Oregon state forests.
- Restructure the ODF's revenue model.
- Restore the public's trust in the agency to operate with transparency, accountability and respect for all people.

It has been scientifically proven that old growth trees in addition to providing habitat for sensitive species and taking carbon out of the atmosphere, also provide a very important interconnected underground network that help nourish other trees in the forest. Why are these trees being logged? They should be protected no matter what. These old growth trees are not only important for clean water and air here in Oregon, but affect climate change around the world.

I also encourage this committee to focus on measure that would increase carbon storage in our state forests and safeguard our public resources for our children and future generations.

Thank you for listening,
Rhonda Piasecki

Sent from my iPhone

A New State Forester Who Is An Advocate For Coastal Communities

From stanette@charter.net <stanette@charter.net>

Date Mon 3/3/2025 9:15 PM

To FORESTRY Boardof * ODF <BoardofForestry@odf.oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek * GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; HUNTINGTON Geoff * GOV <geoff.huntington@oregon.gov>

Cc FERRARI Chandra Alene * GOV <Chandra.Alene.FERRARI@oregon.gov>

 1 attachment (50 KB)

Shibui_ Ancient Forests of Oregon.pdf;

You don't often get email from stanette@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

For your consideration, please see attached letter from a concerned citizen. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Stanette Klatt

March 3, 2025

To: Governor Kotek, Senior Natural Resource Advisor Geoff Huntington, Natural Resources Policy Advisor Chandra Ferrari, and members of the Board of Forestry:

RE: Coastal Forest Communities

I am writing to express my concern for the preservation of our forest communities, including all native flora and fauna. There must be an ecological approach to forest management, not just the trees, but the complexities of a multi layered canopy. My heart breaks as I think about the trees that were toppled during the infamous 2008 wind storm. Prior to the storm, for example, the route along Hwy 30 appeared to be thriving; however, as the winds revealed, this was a mere fringe of trees that were left to give the illusion of a healthy ecosystem. These trees fell like matchsticks because they stood alone - without the naturally occurring buffer provided by deciduous trees, shrubs, and other plants that would have been there without the dubious forest management practice that doomed this system.

I am hopeful that much was learned from this mistake, and that future decisions will take into consideration the systems as a whole; not to be parcelled out in bits and pieces like crumbs tossed to voters.

Additionally, please consider that a compromised environment can lead to increased wildfires, runoff, loss of soil and landslides. We need an ecological approach towards managing the entire forests, and must work to preserve the few parcels of mature forest left intact, which is a small percentage of Clatsop State Forest..

I urge you to take these concerns into consideration when reviewing the CVs of the candidates for our next Oregon State Forester.

Sincerely,
Stanette Klatt
Astoria, Oregon

Oregon Board of Forestry, March 5, 2025

Dear Chair Kelly, acting State Forester Skinner, Members of the Board:
my name is Susan Banyas. I am a resident of Astoria.

I am speaking today to the issue of appointing a new state forester.

I encourage you to hire a forester who commits to upholding your own mission statement envisioning Oregon as a leader in climate change mitigation and adaptation--“climate smart socially equitable forest policies.”

a forester who

comes to Clatsop County to meet the people who live here-- activists, scientists, elected officials, designers, homeowners, loggers—and engages in open, multi-disciplinary conversations regarding work force, education, and regional economics.

a forester who

will finalize the Habitat Conservation Plan and protect healthy, mature forests, who will take a moral and ethical stand to protect our great forest reserves, one of the three most carbon dense forests in the world, as a life force, as life itself.

a forester who

is willing to restructure ODF’s revenue model and adopt a truly sustainable road map, who implements the Climate Change and Carbon Plan and the Private Forest Accords, who develops community-centered networks to build resilience and mitigate climate instability locally, instead of adopting “solutions” posed by the industry creating the climate problems and conditions that could lead to severe wildfires. Plantation tree farms are not a “green solution.”

a forester who

will advocate for the return of a severance tax—a harvest tax—to force the corporations who cut down our forests to pay taxes like everyone else, providing revenue to fight and prevent wildfires.

A forester who works to level the playing field of “forestry management” so that trees are harvested on behalf of the commonwealth, the common good, with gratitude for their nurturing beauty and strength.

Thank you and all the best in the search.

Susan Banyas

1421 Irving Ave., Astoria, OR 97103

susanbanyas.com susanbanyas@gmail.com